



**SOCIAL ACTORS' PARTICIPATION IN THE ACTIVITIES  
OF THE SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS PROCESS**

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**STATEMENT FROM THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS**

Los Angeles, California - June 8, 2022



**Statement from the Indigenous Peoples Summit of the Americas  
IX Summit of the Americas - Building a Sustainable, Resilient, and Equitable Future Los  
Angeles, California - June 8, 2022**

Indigenous peoples throughout the Americas and the Caribbean have been participating in the Summit of the Americas processes for decades, making significant contributions to a world that we want to have for future generations. The themes of the IX Summit of the Americas are critical to the well-being of Indigenous peoples throughout the hemisphere. Our Nations have much to contribute to building a more sustainable, resilient and equitable future for all. To realize these goals, the member states of the Organizations of American States must work collaboratively with Indigenous peoples on the basis of mutual respect, recognition of our inherent rights as affirmed in the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and implementation of the commitments set out in the OAS Plan of Action on implementation of the Declaration [ OAS AG/RES.2976 (LI-O/21)].

Some states took advantage of the COVID-19 pandemic to deepen the violation of the human rights of our peoples. As Indigenous peoples, we have shown resilience for 500 years and we should not have to wait another 500 years to build our future. Indigenous peoples have demonstrated to the world that our traditional ways of life have been focused on building a sustainable, resilient, and equitable life. The reality of the lives of our peoples in Abya Yala is one of impoverishment, marginalization, and inequity. Indigenous peoples and rights defenders are still suffering prosecution and death for their way of thinking. The recognition of collective property rights over our lands, territories and resources is a historical obligation that remains unfulfilled. We, Indigenous peoples, are still displaced because of climate change, hydroelectric projects, reforestation and pseudo-conservationist policies of the States. This legal and moral debt must be settled in order to talk about building truly democratic, resilient, and equitable societies.

**Recommendations:**

- In accordance with Section IX of the OAS Action Plan on the implementation of the Declaration [OAS AG/RES.2976 (LI-O/21)], we recommend the drafting of a report on progress and compliance with the Plan in the OAS countries. To this end, the ACIP will convene a meeting with the OAS Secretariat to form a Working Group/Multilateral Commission to draft the report.
- In view of the post-COVID 19 and environmental crisis, we suggest the drafting of a study on ancestral knowledge and technologies of Indigenous peoples for the preservation of the Environment and Mother Earth, contextualizing the reports to identify Indigenous experiences of sustainable community ecosystems.

**Building a Sustainable, Resilient, and Equitable Future**

The process of rebuilding from the COVID-19 pandemic provides an important opportunity to build a sustainable, resilient, and equitable future. However, this can only be effectively accomplished by proactive measures to respect and to implement the rights contained in the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

We demand State governments and the Organization of American States (OAS) ensure implementation of our rights as Indigenous peoples and that this is reflected in the commitments made by State governments at the IX Summit of the Americas: Building a Sustainable, Resilient, and Equitable Future. Whether these commitments relate to Health and Resilience, the Green Future, Clean Energy Transition, Digital Transformation, or Democracy and Human Rights, all efforts should reflect the objective in the Plan of Action on implementation of the American Declaration in a crosscutting and intercultural way.

### **The Action Plan on Health and Resilience in the Americas**

The COVID-19 pandemic has clearly exposed the marginalization and inequalities that affect us as Indigenous peoples in relation to many sectors, including the economy and healthcare systems, especially in South and Central America. This is particularly the case for Indigenous women and girls, Elders, and gender-diverse individuals, who have suffered disproportionately as a result of the pandemic. An Action Plan on Health and Resilience in the Americas is greatly needed. It must be implemented in an inclusive and equitable way. In developing the Action Plan, States must engage with Indigenous peoples in the full recognition of our health rights.

This includes incorporating our right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical, mental, and spiritual health described in Article 18 of the American Declaration, including the re-insertion of “traditional games and sports” in Article 28(2). It requires that our health systems, traditional medicines, and practices be fully respected and supported.

### **Our Green Future**

Similarly, respect for the rights of Indigenous peoples must be at the forefront of actions to secure a green future. We are stewards of the land, water and air, and hold traditional knowledge about conservation that can be beneficial for all. If we are to meet the challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss, reducing deforestation, and protecting the environment and nature for future generations, we must all work together, as Indigenous peoples, State governments and civil society, based on the recognition of the rights of Indigenous peoples and use of Indigenous wisdom advisory panels.

There should be a strong commitment to acknowledging our rights including, under Article 19, a fundamental right to a healthy, safe, and sustainable environment. Under Articles 25 and 29, we have a right to conserve, restore, and protect the environment and to manage our food systems and our lands, territories, and resources and to maintain and determine our own priorities with respect to our political, economic, social, spiritual and cultural development. We must be actively involved in developing and determining environmental and development programs that affect us. Affirming and respecting these rights will not only support equity but also help address key environmental challenges.

Sometimes, focus is only on the environment. Instead, economic and environmental justice must be achieved simultaneously to make the necessary structural changes to prevailing economic models in order to better the lives of Indigenous peoples and to respect Mother Earth.

### **Accelerating the Clean Energy Transition**

The rights related to our green future are also of paramount importance in supporting a transition to green energy infrastructure and technologies. Energy conservation mechanisms, net-zero emission goals, nature-based solutions, and climate resilience must not only consider the needs of Indigenous peoples; we must be active and equal partners in the development and implementation of these plans and programs.

As stated in the American Declaration Plan of Action, and consistent with Articles 23 and 29 of the American Declaration, and article 32 of the UN Declaration these goals must promote the sustainable development of Indigenous peoples while ensuring full respect for our rights, including establishing or strengthening consultation mechanisms in order to ensure the free, prior, and informed consent of the concerned Indigenous people is sought, taking into account ongoing processes in other international forums.

### **A Regional Agenda for Digital Transformation**

Efforts towards the digital transformation must also recognize the disproportionate barriers Indigenous peoples face in accessing the digital economy. Our communities often lack internet services and digital literacy skills. We call upon State governments, pursuant to Article 27, to work with our communities to support equal opportunities for Indigenous peoples to access the digital economy, including through the training and employment of Indigenous peoples in this area. While this access is invaluable, it is important that these efforts be guided by respect for our right to determine our own economic, social, and political development.

### **Inter-American Action Plan on Democratic Governance**

The Inter-American Action Plan on Democratic Governance must provide concrete actions to support the exercise of our political and cultural rights, and the recognition of our rights more broadly. Facilitating democratic governance and participation must include recognition of the right to participate set out in Article 14, our rights to association, assembly, organization, and expression set out in Article 20, and our right to self-determination, autonomy or self- government in matters relating to our internal and local affairs, and the means for financing our autonomous functions, as set out in Article 21. These efforts must also recognize our right to promote, develop and maintain our institutional structures and distinctive customs, spirituality, traditions, procedures, practices, and juridical systems, as set out in Article 22.

Moreover, as provided for in the American Declaration Plan of Action, State governments should disseminate the contents of the American Declaration across all sectors and incorporate our rights as Indigenous peoples in all spheres of public life.

The Inter-American Action Plan must include a legal binding convention on Indigenous languages, as an outcome of the International Decade on Indigenous Languages.

### **Conclusion**

In closing, while pursuing each of these commitments, we urge State governments to commit themselves to the adoption in their domestic law of the provisions of the American Declaration as well as promoting capacity building for Indigenous peoples and communities. Only then can we achieve the full enjoyment of our human rights within a framework of equality, respect, and non-discrimination, which includes active participation in OAS processes in our own right as Indigenous peoples, nations and governments, including Summits of the Americas. Only then will we be able to collectively achieve a sustainable, resilient, and equitable future.

State governments must make significant commitments to the realization of the rights of Indigenous peoples.